

# MONEYAge

## AWARDS

### 2023

Welcome to the 8th Annual MoneyAge Awards

## WINNERS BROCHURE

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## AWARDS

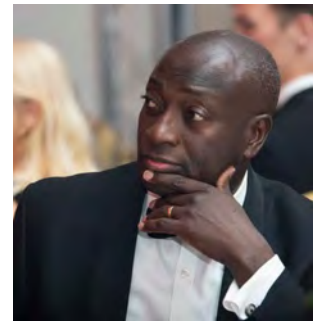
2023



# MONEYAge

## AWARDS

2023



# MONEYAge

## AWARDS

2023

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## Overview

**T**he annual MoneyAge Awards turned eight this year as the personal finance industry once again flocked to the Waldorf Hilton, London. Experts in their field, dressed in their finest awards attire, came together to create a lively room packed with talent to celebrate excellence, professionalism and innovation in the industry. Award-winning comedian Suzi

Ruffell hosted the evening, delivering a hilariously entertaining stand-up routine before helping to present the trophies to the deserving winners. Our congratulations go to all firms that picked up a prize on the night for your outstanding work throughout the

year, especially at a time that has proven to be such a challenging period for the industry. We would like to say a huge thank you to our sponsors, Penfold and The Family Building Society, and to our supporter, the Society of Later Life Advisers, for your continued support, and to the judges (see below), who gave their time and expertise to help decide the winners. Finally, we extend our thanks to everyone who entered and attended these awards. Do visit [www.moneyage.co.uk](http://www.moneyage.co.uk) for more details on future events, and to stay up to date on all the latest news and commentary in the ever-changing personal finance space. We already look forward to welcoming you all with open arms once again in 2024.

## Judges



**Chair of the judges: Adam Cadle**

Editor  
**MoneyAge**



**Carol Knight**

Chief Executive Officer  
**TISA**



**David Butcher**

Founder & Director  
**Communications and Content**



**Robert Sinclair**

Chief Executive  
**Association of Mortgage Intermediaries (AMI)  
and Association of Finance Brokers (AFB)**



**Terri-Ann Humphreys**

Development Director  
**Society of Later Life Advisers**

## The winners

### **Building Society of the Year**

WINNER: Saffron Building Society

### **Financial Adviser Award: Micro Firm of the Year – Sponsored by Penfold**

WINNER: New World Financial Group

### **Financial Adviser Award: Small to Medium Firm of the Year**

WINNER: HCI Financial Services

### **Financial Adviser Award: Medium to Large Firm of the Year**

WINNER: Evelyn Partners

### **Innovation in Consumer Finance Award**

WINNER: Otto Finance

### **Mortgage Provider of the Year**

WINNER: Melton Building Society

### **Mortgage Adviser or Broker of the Year – Sponsored by Family Building Society**

WINNER: Hayden Kilkelly

### **Equity Release Lender of the Year**

WINNER: Standard Life Home Finance

### **Micro Wealth Management Firm of the Year**

WINNER: Britannic Place Financial Management

### **Small to Medium Wealth Management Firm of the Year**

WINNER: Wealthify

### **Medium to Large Wealth Management Firm of the Year**

WINNER: Succession Wealth

### **Specialist Investment Fund or Provider of the Year**

WINNER: Seedrs

### **Savings Account Provider of the Year**

WINNER: Al Rayan Bank

### **ISA Provider of the Year**

WINNER: Hargreaves Lansdown

### **Cryptocurrency Platform Provider of the Year**

WINNER: Umbria Network

### **Pension Provider of the Year**

WINNER: TPT Retirement Solutions

### **Money Transfer Provider of the Year**

WINNER: Currencies Direct

### **Insurance Provider of the Year**

WINNER: Standard Life

### **Marketing Campaign of the Year**

WINNER: Fidelity International

### **Consumer Champion of the Year – Individual**

WINNER: Peter Hamilton, Zurich

### **Consumer Champion of the Year – Company**

WINNER: St. James's Place

### **Ethical Financial Services Provider of the Year**

WINNER: Phoenix Group

### **Best Charity Partnership of the Year**

WINNER: Zurich

### **Diversity Award**

WINNER: Matthew Douglas

### **Technology Provider of the Year**

WINNER: Air Sourcing

### **Sustainability Initiative of the Year**

WINNER: Royal London Asset Management

### **Later Life Lender of the Year**

WINNER: Chorley Building Society

### **HIGHLY COMMENDED:**

### **Mortgage Adviser or Broker of the Year – Sponsored by Family Building Society**

Highly commended: SPF Private Clients

### **Medium to Large Wealth Management Firm of the Year**

Highly Commended: RBC Brewin Dolphin

### **Money Transfer Provider of the Year**

Highly Commended: Universal Partners

### **Marketing Campaign of the Year**

Highly Commended: Zurich

### **Diversity Award**

Highly Commended: Fisher Investments

**MONEYAge**  
AWARDS  
2023

WINNER

## Building Society of the Year: Saffron Building Society



The Building Society of the Year award is given to the building society excelling in product provision and customer service.

The judges said a 9% savings account and a 64% increase in lending to first time buyers is a fantastic performance in anyone's language. Step forward Saffron Building Society.

In 2022, Saffron supported 353 first-time buyers to get on the property ladder with total lending of £77.7m. For children, the Society completed the first stage of revamping its children and young adult proposition, including a range of simplification and the introduction of a new best buy children's two-year fixed rate bond.

Saffron recognised that as a modern mutual Society, it has a key role to play in supporting its heartland communities and this has continued to develop over recent years thanks to a commitment to financial education within schools through a partnership with WizeUp; a commitment to charitable giving through the Saffron Community Fund; and the support of local clubs and societies.

Saffron hailed the start of 2023 with a complete return to the mortgage market. At the same time, it also announced a raft of rate reductions across its full product portfolio. In March, the Society announced that, for the first time, it was opening its Saffron Community Fund grant application twice throughout the year,

committing to give away more than £75,000 in donations to charities and not-for-profit organisations. In the same month, Saffron further cemented its position as a specialist lender with its large loan launch. The move saw an increase in max loan sizes on residential and BTL products up to £3m for up to 80% LTV and £1m at 90% LTV. The self-build maximum loan size was also increased to £3m.

April saw the building society make history by electing its first-ever female chair, Barbara Anderson, an award-winning non-executive director. Finally, Saffron wanted to look at ways to give back to its members, and from this, the first-ever Members' Month was born. Members' Month is a chance for Saffron to celebrate, reward and thanks its members by 'going BIG on the little things'.

In June, The Society launched a market-leading savings account designed to make a BIG difference to small savers – exclusively available to members. The Members' Month Loyalty Saver boasted a 9% fixed interest rate – double the current Bank of England base rate and the only savings account to beat inflation.

It also launched the BIG branch roadshow where members could come to their local branch to meet and talk to Saffron CEO Colin Field.

Saffron really is a leader in its space and a huge congratulations must be given to all at the Society for an outstanding year and a richly deserved award.





# We don't believe one size fits all.

At Saffron, we understand the unique challenges you face when trying to secure a mortgage for your self employed clients. That's why as a specialist lender, we offer flexible criteria. We review affordability based on an applicant's most recent year's income\* and only require 12 months of trading (minimum)\*\*.

We also know that every case is different, and our BDM team offer dedicated support to find solutions, no matter how quirky the case may seem.

**Get in touch today. 01799 582925 | [ist@saffronbs.co.uk](mailto:ist@saffronbs.co.uk) | [saffronforintermediaries.co.uk](http://saffronforintermediaries.co.uk)**

\*when there has been an uplift in income an accountant can confirm will continue.

\*\*plus a projection of future earnings.



**Saffron**  
For Intermediaries



## Medium to Large Wealth Management Firm of the Year Succession Wealth



Succession Wealth has proved itself to be a cut above the rest when it comes to meeting the ever-complex needs of its clients.

Succession Wealth provides high-quality independent financial advice to over 20,000 clients throughout the UK. Its wealth planners are highly experienced professionals who can understand diverse and often complex client needs, putting in place personalised planning to help clients feel confident about their financial future.

The planning is supported by Succession's Investment Matrix. Succession's Investment Matrix brings together a carefully selected range of solutions which are matched to a client's personal risk profile and their investment goals.

The Matrix includes Succession's Model Portfolio Service, which was developed in partnership with its sister company, Succession Advisory Services, and gives clients access to professional portfolio management from their most trusted, long-standing partners. These solutions are only available to Succession's clients and offer a truly diversified investment strategy, tailored to the tolerances, performance parameters, and assumptions that underpin a client's financial plan.

Following its acquisition by Aviva, Succession launched a refreshed restricted proposition, Succession Financial Management (SFM), which provides quality professional services to those with less complex needs.

The company's financial planners are all now dual authorised, ensuring that they can assess each client's specific needs, and engage them for the most appropriate service.

As part of its commitment to personalisation, Succession has created several specialist divisions:

- Succession Sports and Entertainment, which specialises in the unique financial requirements of those working within those sectors.
- Succession Independent Schools work with school staff at many of the country's independent schools, providing specialist guidance on a range of planning, pension, and tax matters.
- Succession Employee Benefit Solutions provide consultancy to all types and sizes of corporate clients, creating and managing benefit packages that attract, reward, and retain talent.

The judges also recognised Succession for its use of technology, and its commitment to and focus on diversity and inclusion.

The technology team delivers many initiatives to refine the client experience, including updating the technology which supports client reports and correspondence; automating back-office processes to reduce turnaround times; building out system requirements to deliver the new restricted proposition, SFM; and developing the systems necessary to handle client referrals from Aviva.

The company has developed a Diversity and Inclusion Committee to provide a more accepting and caring environment for both colleagues and clients. As testament to the effectiveness of its endeavours, it has achieved a score of 4.8 out of 5 from client feedback on VouchedFor.

Many congratulations to all at Succession Wealth for an outstanding year, incorporating exemplary innovation and leading technological developments. It is a shining light in the wealth management industry and is a company which continues to raise standards for the rest to follow.




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## Pension Provider of the Year: TPT Retirement Solutions



Furthermore, TPT has also introduced a new sustainable opportunities allocation to its default target date funds (TDFs); added a Shariah-compliant Islamic Global Equity Fund to its self-select range; introduced the facility to take multiple lump sums; met its service level agreements in >98% of cases (against a target of 95%); and achieved investors in People Gold for the 13th consecutive year.

Since October 2022, >58,000 member engagement emails have been sent, with average open and click-through rates of 45% and 20% respectively (above industry average). In addition, between October 2022 and April 2023 its educational site for DC savers had >111,000 visits, with a 29% increase in average monthly traffic compared to 2021/22.

As a result of engagement activities, 43% of active members have registered for access to their online account, 25% have logged in over the last 12 months and TPT now has email addresses for c. 85% of active members – something which is crucial to the success of its digital-first approach to communications.

The Pension Provider of the Year award is given to the provider that has displayed a true understanding of the increasingly complex pensions market and has the consumer at the heart of its offering. Standing head and shoulders above the rest in this category is TPT Retirement Solutions.

TPT looks after c.440,000 members, with a total of c.£2.7bn in DC AuM. Its long-standing mission is 'making membership worthwhile', and improving DC member engagement is one of our top priorities.

The judges applauded the firm's creative and holistic approach to member communication, engagement and feedback. Indeed, TPT is all about supporting DC members throughout their pensions journey. Its aim is to deliver a modern, compelling pensions experience – ensuring members have access to the right support, at the right time, to make informed decisions.

In the last 18 months, TPT has introduced its 'picture your future' interactive video quiz bringing to life the PLSA's Retirement Living Standards; a new pensions savings tool to help members understand if their savings are on track and easily model the impact of making changes; improved personalised video benefit statements that now reference the Standards and are segmented based on age; an at-retirement guidance service; an independent financial advice service; and live educational pension planning webinars.

The pensions provider space is a competitive one with a lot of new development and progress continuously being made. TPT's award entry was exemplary, and it continues to be a shining light in the pensions space, putting members at the heart of its developments and seeking their feedback to help shape its services. Well done to all at the firm for a richly deserved award.

### Pension Provider of the Year: TPT Retirement Solutions



## What's next for your defined benefit scheme?

For DB schemes considering consolidation it can be challenging to establish which solution is the best fit for your scheme. Jonathan Jackaman explores the options now available, for wherever you are on your endgame journey.

*By Jonathan Jackaman, Head of Business Development, TPT*

In recent years, the UK government and the Pensions Regulator have made it clear that, for many defined benefit (DB) pension schemes, consolidation may now be the aim of the game. However, consolidation means different things to different people. Since the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) published its white paper on 'protecting defined benefit pension schemes' back in 2018, a variety of new products and services have been developed across the industry - all designed to help trustees and sponsors embrace consolidation.

That means there are now a myriad of options available, ranging from a complete severing of all ties with your scheme to simply consolidating certain services, and everything in between. Some of these options, such as superfunds, are brand new and yet to be used. Others, such as master trusts, have been around for decades but are now more sophisticated than ever - and becoming more prominent as the focus on regulation increases. However, all are subject to rigorous regulatory scrutiny and standards to help protect members' benefits.

So, should you be considering consolidation options for your DB scheme? What are the benefits of consolidation? And how do you decide which approach is right for you and your members? This article provides a brief summary of the options available to you and highlights some of the key points to consider when reviewing your scheme's strategy.

#### **Still got time for your day job?**

Running a DB pension scheme is an ever-more complicated process, with a constant stream of new rules and regulations for trustees and sponsoring employers to understand and adhere to. DB Funding Code of Practice, Pension Schemes Act 2021, GMP (guaranteed minimum pension) equalisation, TCFD (taskforce on climate-related financial disclosures) reporting - to name just a few recent examples. And there are, of course, many more. On top of the perpetual steep learning

curve for trustees, each new piece of legislation or updated regulation typically means new fees to be paid.

Consolidating some or all elements of managing your scheme can create significant time and cost savings, while improving quality and reducing (or, in some cases, removing entirely) the burden on your trustees.

#### **Your DB consolidation options: in summary**

As mentioned at the start, consolidation means different things to different people. For some, it may conjure the idea of a major, irreversible decision such as the scheme transferring to a superfund. Even where this appeals as a long-term objective, much like buyouts, this route may be simply unachievable - or unaffordable - in the short term.

At the other end of the scale, many consider the appointment of a professional independent trustee to be a form of consolidation - or, at least, the first step towards it.

Between these two extremes are numerous options for trustees to consider.

Harnessing the benefits of consolidation for specific areas of scheme management has been widespread for some time - for example, with the use of third-party administrators. Consolidating the investment piece has seen growing popularity in recent years - either through use of a platform, or going a step further and outsourcing entirely with the appointment of a fiduciary manager. However, even where full fiduciary management is used, this still leaves trustees with the responsibility for everything else - actuarial, legal, governance, administration, covenant - not to mention member communications and support. A contributing factor to the slowdown in fiduciary appointments over the last few years could be down to the consolidation of investment not being enough on its own.

This is where master trusts and fully integrated service offerings have a crucial role to play. These work in a similar way and offer many of the same benefits. The big difference,

and deciding factor, between the two being whether or not you wish to keep your own trust and trustee board.

#### **Master trusts: the best of both worlds?**

For sponsors who are keen to maintain a link with their scheme, but would like to move away from the responsibilities, costs and burden associated with trusteeship, a master trust could be the answer. Likewise, master trusts can be a natural next step where a scheme is looking to consolidate as much as possible, but buyout or transfer to a superfund is not currently feasible (either from a financial or data/asset perspective).

There are many benefits to using a master trust for consolidation:

- all aspects of scheme management are handled for you
- a professional trustee board provides oversight and governance
- your scheme is ring-fenced with its own funding and investment strategy, and no responsibility for other scheme's liabilities
- access to sophisticated risk management and investment strategies that might otherwise be unavailable to smaller schemes
- significant cost and time savings
- can be used as a stepping stone to the ultimate end game for the sponsor

For example, schemes transferring to our DB Complete full-service master trust solution typically see significant savings in scheme running costs, while also improving quality with our award-winning administration and member communications. And members have comfort in knowing their scheme remains linked to the sponsor.

#### **Move to a single provider, but maintain control**

Where retaining decision-making control and your own trustee board is an important driver, but full consolidation is otherwise appealing, moving to a fully integrated service could help you significantly streamline and simplify your scheme management. This can materially lighten the load on your trustees – although they maintain overall responsibility.

Using an integrated solution with specialist in-house teams for each service area can deliver similar cost and time-saving benefits as a master trust, removing any friction and fee-overlap between different advisers.

Crucially, with both our DB Complete master trust solution and new DB Connect service for trustees, you can choose to

evolve from one to the other, or simply move away at any time without penalty.

#### **Your end-game journey**

Each consolidation option offers different benefits. As with most things, it all comes down to finding the right approach for your scheme, sponsor and members. In many cases, you may find it beneficial to use different consolidation options as you progress through your end-game journey. For example, moving to a single provider for all services to resolve both data and illiquid asset issues, then to a master trust, before finally securing members' benefits through buyout.



#### **TPT: making pension schemes perform better for everyone**

Schemes using our DB services benefit from:

- significantly reduced running costs
- known, predictable fee structures
- full fiduciary management, with investment solutions tailored to your requirements
- responsible investment (RI) 'as standard', with full integration of our comprehensive RI framework and net zero commitment
- sophisticated funding and risk management strategies
- our award-winning administration, innovation and member communications
- streamlined, efficient scheme management with user-friendly reporting
- our experienced, approachable and client-focused team

Crucially, you can choose whether or not to keep your own trustees.

# MONEYAge

## AWARDS

### 2023

## Money Transfer Provider of the Year: Currencies Direct



With excellent exchange rates, no transfer fees and a fully customer-centric approach, the judges said Currencies Direct is a real leader.

Founded in 1996, it now has 25+ offices in the UK, Southern Europe, the US, South Africa and India. Its Group employs over 700 currency experts and transfers more than £10bn in international payments a year. Its global reach means it can service customers across time zones seamlessly and be there for them whenever they need.

Competitiveness, transparency, and customer service underpin everything the company does, and all of these elements are crucial to its success. Customers have the luxury of the added benefit of guidance from a personal currency specialist and tools which can help them fix or target an exchange rate, helping their money go even further. The company's high-touch model means that customers aren't passed around a call centre but deal with the same person every time. This customer-centric approach is supported by market-leading products, like its online service and app.

Additionally, this year the company launched its multi-currency debit card, making it even more competitive. With the card, customers can top up their accounts using the app and spend

seamlessly overseas in more than 200 countries (wherever Mastercard is accepted). Customers can also withdraw funds from ATMs and keep track of their spending with instant notifications. Complete card management, from freezing/unfreezing, to viewing the PIN or reporting the card lost or stolen, is all just a tap away in the app.

On the issue of transparency, Currencies Direct gives its customers the ability to check live trading rates anytime, anywhere, through the online service and app. Rates are clear, competitive, and only fixed once the customer has entered into a contract with the company.

After clients use the company's services, it sends them a customer satisfaction survey so it can identify areas for potential improvement. As part of this survey, the company asks them how likely they are to recommend the company on a scale of one to ten. Responses are used to calculate the company's NPS score. An NPS score of 70+ is considered 'World Class' and the company has maintained an NPS score of 75+ for the last five years. The company also has a 4.9 rating on Trustpilot – one of the highest in the industry - and ninety-six per cent of all their reviews are either 5 or 4 stars.

Currencies Direct aims to stand out from the crowd. By staying competitive, providing a true multi-channel experience, and putting customer service first, it does just that. Congratulations.

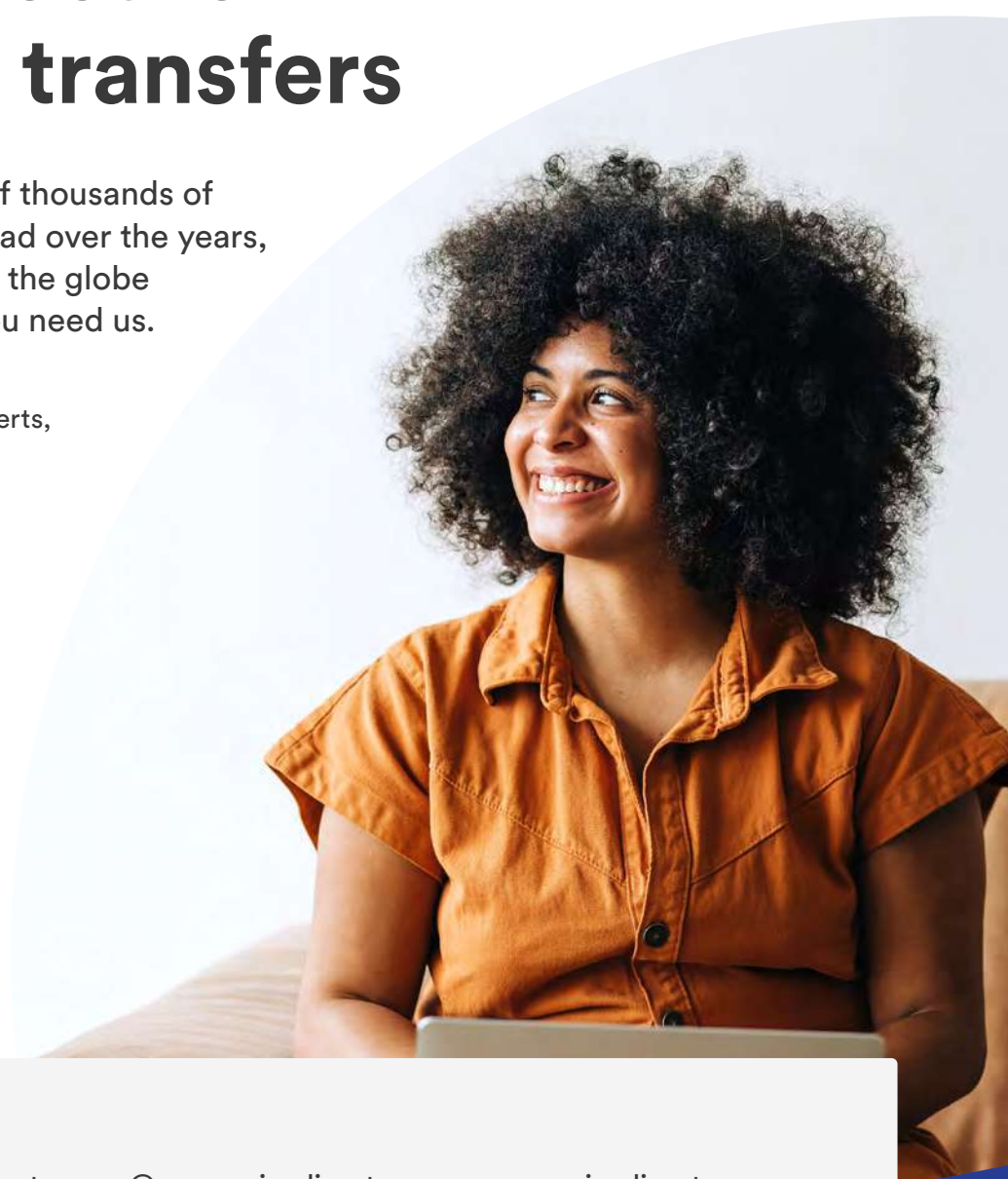


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- Regular currency insights
- Award-winning service
- 24/7 currency transfers



## Find out more

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# MONEYAge

## AWARDS

### 2023

## Insurance Provider of the Year: Standard Life



Standard Life's landmark transactions with pension plans, strong ESG credentials and outstanding growth impressed the judges making it a clear winner in this category.

The rapid growth of the company has been fuelled by combining agility and a spirit of innovation with Standard Life's 200+ years of experience. In a series of recent landmark pension insurance transactions, the firm utilised its proven expertise and willingness to develop bespoke arrangements for pension schemes. Recently, it completed a second £200m transaction with the Agfa UK Group Pension Plan.

The firm's strong growth contributed to a record-breaking 2022 for Phoenix Group, with new business long-term cash generation hitting a record £1233m (934m of which was contributed by the BPA business). Whilst Standard Life has secured over 40,000 members' financial futures through its transactions over the last year, meaning it now has over 104,000 pension scheme member benefits insured under its bulk annuity policies, it doesn't believe its role and responsibility should end there. Once under the Standard Life umbrella, it continually engages and supports member through its enhanced proposition and experience. For example, it targets the right members at the right time with the right message to help them make informed decisions. It has also introduced self-service. It has partnered with market-leading

administrator Equiniti to offer a sector-leading self-service portal, enabling members to obtain real-time transfer values (non-guaranteed) and model benefit by changing dates and tax-free cash amounts. The portal also allows members to see past documents, make requests, change details and go paperless.

ESG is also at the heart of the business. Eighty-five per cent of clients said they expect the firm to invest responsibly, and it has set some of the most ambitious climate-related targets, with a group-wide goal to reduce carbon emission intensity for its £270bn investment portfolio by at least 50% by 2030, and net-zero by 2050. ESG considerations are integrated into investment process, and it has increased the coverage of its ESG data analytics. The firm's bulk annuity business also supports sustainable investments and social projects including a £220m investment in renewable energy; £542m to help 16 housing associations provide homes for society's most vulnerable and £364m to give communities greater access to care homes.

Standard Life places great emphasis on investing in its people and offers a pioneering Accelerator Graduate programme to develop insurance leaders of tomorrow. On the research side, in 2022 it launched a landmark joint research initiative with the OECD – the first of its kind in the industry – exploring issues of longevity and financial security.

Congratulations to all at Standard Life for a fantastic year and for shining the light in this sector for others to follow.

**Standard Life**  
Part of Phoenix Group



# Age 36

marks the beginning of  
retirement countdown.

## But is it early enough?

In our biggest ever survey, we asked over 6,000 people how they're feeling about their savings and retirement.

Although 36 is the turning point for people to start thinking about retirement planning – 55% of retirees wish they'd thought about it sooner.

Let's help people start saving earlier – and help make life a little more certain.

Read our **Retirement Voice** report for more insights.



### Consumer Champion of the Year Company: St. James's Place



A dedicated, face-to-face advice service centred on the financial wellbeing of its clients and high levels of innovation make St. James's Place (SJP) a real champion in the eyes of the judges.

The firm leads in researching and publishing insights to drive positive change at governmental and industry level. It recently launched a Finance in Society Research Institute in collaboration with the University of Gloucestershire, to advance personal finance knowledge and the company has also produced a unique Financial Health Index exploring the financial health of 2,000+ UK adults to understand consumers' financial priorities and challenges, and has produced a Future of Financial Planning Report.

SJP has launched a financial wellbeing strategy (including an extensive financial education programme) to tackle financial exclusion and inequality. Furthermore, it is targeting social care, publishing a landmark report about how the social care funding cap can be addressed. It is also working with Care Sourcer to provide a concierge service helping people navigate the social care system, and plan and fund long-term care, including assessing benefit entitlements and creating a care package.

SJP also invests in its people to ensure they can support diverse clients with diverse needs at every life stage (including pioneering VR training). Senior manager regime training, mentoring and

annual symposiums are all on offer as well as an online knowledge platform, Techlink, providing advisers with technical knowledge, guidance and updates.

The last year has seen SJP put vulnerable customers at the heart of its service, including a Vulnerability & Client Assistance Manager 'in the field' to support advisers, podcasts on handling vulnerability, and access to the MorganAsh Resilience System (a secure platform that calculates a vulnerability rating and provides recommendations for each client). It also offers an online vulnerability assessment tool, co-created with Comentis, helping advisers identify vulnerable clients and produce an assessment report. Subsequently, 91% of the firm's people agree 'the fair treatment of clients is central to its culture'.

SJP works hard on building a diverse adviser pipeline. It is doing this by establishing a technical academy, enabling 18-year-olds to join a five-year programme, culminating in a financial planning qualification. It is also increasing investment in the SJP Academy, aimed at those looking to enter financial planning, or second careerists. A Futures in Finance paid internship for 17-21-year-olds is also offered.

From the day SJP was founded, it has always focused on community-related activities focusing on supporting social mobility and financial and social inclusion in the UK. All employees have a two-day volunteering allowance - to deliver financial education or renovate community spaces, for example - and the SJP Charitable Foundation - the UK's sixth largest corporate foundation - raised £10.4m for charitable organisations in 2022.

Congratulations to all at SJP for your outstanding work and for sitting head and shoulders above the rest.

**St  
James's  
Place**

Samantha Bradford  
Founder – Simplicity Financial Planning



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**St  
James's  
Place**

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# MONEYAge

## AWARDS

### 2023

## Financial Adviser Award: Small to Medium Firm of the Year

### HCI Financial Services



This award category recognises the financial advice firm which has demonstrated a successful service offering, shows a true understanding of the advice market, and puts the client at the heart of everything it does. Excelling in this category this year is HCI Financial Services.

HCI is a growing, privately held independent financial advisory firm in the North West. It is a team of financial planners and technical support staff all working together to build lifelong relationships with its 3000 plus clients whilst helping them achieve their financial ambitions. All HCI's advisers take great pride in guiding clients to the achievement of their financial objectives – a comfortable retirement, life without a mortgage or other financial goals.

The firm has registered a number of notable developments recently. In the first five months of 2023 a further 50 new clients were won, adding to the 138 new clients in 2022. Four hundred clients have been integrated where HCI has taken on the role of adviser from three retiring advisers.

In the last year, HCI has grown its number of employees by 20% from 35 to 42. Teams were created within the business to ensure that the family-feel of the business was retained as this culture is a key reason why clients choose HCI. In the last year, a number of

staff have used the firm's exam support and training resources to further their professional development with further Chartered Insurance Institute qualifications. In the last year we had one of our advisers and our general manager both become Fellows, whilst an adviser became a Chartered Financial Planner. In addition, there were 12 professional exam passes from the firm's support team in 2022.

As the business has grown, several new technologies have also been implemented to both assist with operations and also to improve the client experience at HCI. Specifically, HCI is now a "Champion" on the Intelliflo eAdviser grading and it has rolled out the Personal Finance Portal (PFP) functionality to clients. The PFP enables clients to communicate securely with their adviser, upload documents and see their plans in one easy-to-use place. HCI's paraplanning department also now utilised Genovo to assist with research and suitability report writing, and DocuSign was introduced in 2022 to reduce paper use and facilitate digital signatures.

Community engagement is also a major part of HCI. In the last year, it has supported a player in attending a Wales U21 Lacrosse camp, the Palm Sunday concert at the Marble Church in Bodelwyddan, and had a team participate in a Three Peaks effort to raise funds for Alder Hey Children's Hospital.

The judges said HCI has not been afraid to adapt its structure to meet the needs of its success whilst retaining the all-important family feel which is so important to both colleagues and clients alike. Congratulations.



## Mortgage Adviser or Broker of the Year: Hayden Kilkelly



The Mortgage Adviser or Broker of the Year award is given to the firm displaying an understanding of the needs of its clients and one which displays quality and professionalism in all aspects of its business.

The clear leader in this category for 2023 is Hayden Kilkelly. Whilst retirement planning is HK's sweet spot, their more recent focus has been to broaden its advice range to encapsulate not just the expanding needs of its clients, but also their children and parents. The 'HK Way' advisory proposition is built around a bucket-list approach to aspirational lifetime financial planning and the creation and ongoing maintenance of lifetime financial plans.

HK launched its Mortgage Advisory service in 2021, including later life mortgage advice, and its later-life advisory focus is benefiting from engagement with the Society of Later Life Advisers (SOLLA). Referrals via existing clients, accountants and solicitors are frequent and are encouraged. Its mortgage business is growing by 'word of mouth' and the firm has quickly created a reputation for providing excellent service levels. The mortgage advice proposition has been priced accordingly, with the firm seeing it as being worth much more than an income generator for its business.

HK's business statistics, of which the judges were particularly impressed, highlight that its business process works. From

31/12/16 (the end of trading year one) to 31/12/22 turnover was up 97%. Net profit after tax is up 274%, recurring income as a percentage of turnover is at 93% and referrals as a percentage of new clients is at 100%.

HK was awarded (2019) and retained (2020, 2021, 2022, 2023) Corporate Chartered Status by the Chartered Insurance Institute; positioning HK among the elite financial planning firms in terms of status, qualifications, technical competence, ethics, client service and ongoing client support. In addition to both directors having attained CII Fellowship status, HK has been positively promoting the financial planning profession to secondary schools, and thus 'giving something back', via a PFS Education Outreach Ambassador role.

Mortgage Advice is extending the sphere in which HK works. It is changing the shape of its client base, with inter-generational planning building additional security for the business going forwards. It is not a typical mortgage broker with the firm strongly believing there's no reason why a transactional piece of advice cannot be the bedrock of a lifetime of financial planning.

Congratulations to all at HK for an outstanding year and for cementing the Mortgage Advisory service as such a crucial tool in the overall business proposition.



**Hayden Kilkelly**  
Independent Financial Advisors

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## AWARDS

### 2023

## Micro Wealth Management Firm of the Year: Britannic Place Financial Management



The judges applauded Britannic Place Financial Management's entry this year for its strong case studies, excellent client feedback and outstanding turnover and profits.

This year has been tough economically, but Britannic Place continues to excel in all it does, managing over £50m for just over 100 client "families". It focuses predominantly on executives or small business owners who are approaching, at or in retirement, and on average clients have around £500,000 in investable assets.

Recent client feedback showed that 100% of the firm's clients were satisfied with performance across the board and several accreditations have been received. Director, Steve Perera, has also recently received a 2023 Top Adviser Award from VouchedFor and has received a score of 4.9 out of 5. In addition, Britannic Place has also achieved a 2023 Top Rated Firm Award. This is the second consecutive year that it has achieved this and it is the only Top Rated firm in Worcestershire this year. To achieve this, the firm had to invite all clients to leave a review on VouchedFor and it had to achieve a certain, high level of ratings from these clients.

Britannic Place holds Corporate Chartered Status, demonstrating a commitment to a shared code of ethics, and a commitment to raising the profile and standards of the industry. The firm has also pledged to follow the nine statements outlined in the Financial

Vulnerability Charter, highlighting commitment to customers and providing them with excellence and trustworthiness in their financial planning service. Director, Steve Perera, is a Solla Retirement Advice Standard holder, meaning he has the necessary qualifications to provide both practical and emotional guidance for older clients and deliver effective advice for their specific needs. Britannic Place is also RQ Certified, meaning that it has gone through and been successful in a rigorous, independent assessment process.

Community is at the heart of everything the firm conducts. Britannic Place is a Gold member of the Hereford and Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce, sponsors of Worcester RFC, has supported Worcester Hockey Club's new multi-million building by sponsoring some of the bricks they used to build the new complex, and Perera has been a member of the prestigious Cellar Club in Birmingham, a leading group of financial planners, since 2014.

Perera has recently become an Education Champion through the My Personal Finance Skills initiative. As a result, he has presented workshops on personal finance skills to children at local schools.

The firm also prides itself on employee culture and progression, enabling them to develop as much as possible in their careers.

A huge congratulations must be given to Britannic Place for an outstanding entry and win in an extremely competitive category at this year's awards.



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## AWARDS

### 2023

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